

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

## Affairs of *FRANCE*:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *News-Writers*  
and *Petty-Statesmen*, of all Sides.

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Tuesday, April 11. 1704.

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**T**He Debate I entred into, about the Banishment of the *Hugonots* out of *France*, was so abruptly broken off in the last, that I must go on with it here, and repeat this part as necessary to lead the Reader back into the Story. That I am of the Opinion, the King of *France's* Banishing the Protestants, tho' it Impoverish'd and Unpeopled part of the Country; and tho' it fill'd his Enemies with Soldiers, yet at the same time it was the most Politick Action of his Life, and the Foot upon which he now builds that Absolute Dominion, which is so necessary for the carrying on all his vast Designs.

I don't think fit to engage here in a Dispute about the honesty of it, I agree to all that has been reasonably said to that point; and without doubt, the breaking and dissolving the Edict of *Nantz*, is an Injury not to be Defended.

But as to the Policy of it: 'Tis plain it was so great a Stroke to all *Europe*, that all his Attempts since have been founded upon this Head; for till he had first cleared his Country of that Numerous Injured People, he could never have ventured to carry an Offensive War into all the Borders of *Europe*: Nor could he have spared his Numerous Armies, for so many various En-

terprizes; he must have maintained strong Garrisons in the Provinces of *Guienne*, *Gascogne*, *Languedoc*, *Normandy*, *Bretaign*, &c. where the Protestants were Numerous, to have kept the Rod of Iron upon their Backs, and every Revolt would have hazarded a Revolution of his Affairs.

This needs no other Demonstration, than from the Present Disturbance his Affairs have receiv'd from the smallest handful of these People, in the Mountains of *Languedoc*. These *Camisars*, who, according to the largest Accounts I have met with, which I think deserve Credit, never amounted to above 900 Families, have occasioned the Attendance of a Marshal of *France*, 18 Battalions of Foot, and 2 Regiments of Dragoons, for near 2 Years.

Not that the Number of the People themselves could require such a Body of Men to face them, or that the Designs they could possibly pursue, were so well worth while to prevent; for all Men allow they wou'd have been glad to have Marched away, (and quitted the Place) either to the *Vaudois*, *Geneva*, or the *Swiss Cantons*. But the Case lay in the Consequences, the Inhabitants of *Languedoc*, and part of *Dauphiné*, being for the most part Favourers of those of the Religion, the Court was ex-

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coading jealous of a General Insurrection.

This is as much as I want from the Story; what Number of Battalions then must the King have maintained, to have Bridled the whole Body of Protestants, if those 300000 Men, which we say he has Banish'd, were now in his Country?

It is further considerable, If we reflect how long this small Body of *Cevennois* have maintained themselves in those Hills, in spite of all the Marechal de *Montrevel* can do. That their Numbers are not probable to be the cause is plain, that the Inaccessibleness of the Mountains is not the Cause, is also plain, for where one Man may go, another may follow, and they had certainly been beaten out of their Fastnesses long ago, or starv'd in them. But the Case is, the Country are their Friends, the New Converts are the Men, they are to day in their Shops, to morrow in the Hills: To day Peasants at the Plough, to morrow Camisars, with a Musquet on their shoulder: And from the Sence of this, it is, That to suppress the Camisars, the French have Orders to destroy all the Country, burn the Villages, and either destroy or remove the People; and this is the only way to suppress them; and by this Method, tho' it be but a Cruel one, they will be suppress'd, unless some strange Effort from the side of *Savoy*, open a way to relieve them.

From all this 'tis plain, that the Banishment of the *French* Protestants, however it might weaken the *French* as a Nation, by lessening the Number of their Inhabitants, a loss that fruitful People are likely enough to recover; yet it was certainly the most exquisite piece of Policy the King of *France* could be Master of, and the only way to secure to himself that Arbitrary Power he has since obtain'd at home, and that scope to prosecute his vast Designs abroad.

Not that I argue from hence, that the Protestants were of a Seditious Principle, and would have taken any unjust occasion to have Rebell'd; rais'd Commotions in the Country; but neither will I promise for them that they would have born with Patience, the Oppressions they must in all Probability have undergone; but that their Number being so great, they might have

taken Arms on the first Appearance of a Powerful Protection, as they had formerly done; and the Possibility of this, the King with a foresight peculiar to himself, effectually prevented, by venturing all the evil Consequences of an entire Banishment, rather than the risque of their Loyalty, whom he knew he must Oppress.

As to the Zealous part of it, that he did it from a true Principle to obtain Catholick Unity in the Gallican Church, and Merit the Title of the most Christian; I have nothing to say to it; the Religion of Princes is a thing too deep for me to dive into: I have never seen much of it in the World, and I have no great Reason to expect it there, any more than in other Politick Courts.

Whoever thus reads the Character of Arbitrary Power, may make a very good improvement of it, to the Advantage of the *English* Constitution, which is so fence'd and secur'd by the Laws and Popular Right, that the Liberties of the Nation are in a manner Impregnable.

What tho' our Princes are the least qualified for Glory and the Laurels of the Conqueror; the fine words which Custom puts upon the Invaders of their Neighbours; the Leaf-Gold which the Devil has laid over the back-side of Ambition, to make it Glitter to the World, to wheedle Princes into the Crime, and Subjects into the Folly.

If our Princes are less able to encroach upon their Neighbours, by Reason of their Limitations of their own Governments; they are at the same time better Qualified, to preserve what they enjoy from the Violence of others.

Despotick Absolute Power, makes great Names, but Legal Power makes great Nations.

But to return to the Text. The Arbitrary Dominion of the *French* Throne, is the Foundation of their Present Greatness, being properly adapted to that end; and as this is apparent from the Dependence of the Nobility and Gentry, upon the Favours of their Prince, so

2. From the Ways and Methods of Levying both Soldiers to Fight, and Money to Pay them.



If his most Christian Majesty finds it necessary to Increase or Recruit his standing Troops, he does not Beat up his Drums with an *all Gentlemen Soldiers, that are willing to serve*; and then for Encouragement, there's Coat, Shoos, Stockings, &c. and *two Guineas in ready Money*, for every Rake that will run away from his Wife and Children. But the Great Council of War having resolved on Raising the Men, and agreed on the Number, the Intendant of every Place receives an Order from the Governour of the Province, and he from his Majesty, to send up such or such Numbers of Men, proportioned to the Country; and these Issue out Warrants to the Sub-Intendants, and so to the Officers of every Village, and they have nothing to do, but Mark out who must be the Men, and give them Orders to prepare themselves to March; which Orders are Obey'd with all the Submission of a most Regular and Entire Subordination.

Let us look back for a Proof of this, to the last Year; we were told the King of France had given Orders for raising 50000 Men; we are never told since, as we are from other Places, that the Levies go on with good success, and the Officers hope shortly to have their Regiments Compleat. Absolute Power abates all that Ceremony, and saves the Charge: The Officers have nothing to do, but to take their Orders of the Secretary of War, and Receive their Men at such or such a Place, where the Intendant of that Place delivers them by tale, like a Drove of Sheep. And the first News we had, after we heard of the Order for raising the Men, was from the Frontiers, where 16000 of them were Ship'd for *Final*, to Reinforce the Duke

*de Vendosme*; 15000 in *Alsace*, ready to pass into *Bavaria*, and proportioned Numbers in other Places. Here's the Advantage of Absolute Government; here's the Suitableness of it, to Conquest abroad; without this *Mahomet's Banner* had never advanc'd into *Europe*, nor that Barbarous Race Planted on the Ruins of the Western Empire. Without this, the French Monarchy had never arriv'd to their Present Greatness, nor would 300000 of his Subjects flee their Country at his Positive Command.

If a King of England should, *though for any real Offence*, send his Orders to a Subject, *tho' of the meanest sort*, to be gone, and quit the Nation, he would not stir a Foot; and 'tis Forty to one, but he would have Manners little enough to tell him so in plain *English*.

If the Message was to a Man of Quality and Sence, he would Reply in Words something like this.

*I am very sorry I have the Misfortune to fall under your Majesty's Displeasure, and 'tis a great Punishment to me, to be Banish'd your Majesty's Presence; But, as to Banishment from my Native Country, I humbly claim the Privilege of an English Man, to be Try'd by my Peers, and to suffer no Sentence but what is due by the Laws of the Land.*

We have a very handsome Instance of this, in *Arch-Bishop Cranmer*, in the days of King *Henry VIII*. When for some Speech made in the House of Lords, his Majesty Commanded him out of the House, which he very Modestly and Humbly, yet Boldly, Refused to do, Claiming his Privilege of Peerage, and Liberty of Speech; by Right of the Constitution of the House of Lords, and which the King afterwards allow'd to be just, when his Anger was over.

## Mercure Scandale :

O R,

### ADVICE from the Scandalous CLUB.

THE Club has been taken up this Week with a Complaint against the Society for Reformation of Manners; the Com-

plaintant alledg'd a Certain Sentence in the Sermon lately Preach'd by Mr. B— of St. Katherine's, which he said was a scandalous Affront



Affront to the Reformers, and they took no Notice of it.

The Persons that appeared for the Reformers, alledg'd they had taken Notice of it to Mr B—r.

At which the Complainant Demanded, whether what the Person said was true or not: They said they could not deny the truth of the Matter.

The Complainant reply'd, If it was not true, 'twas a Scandal for them to take any Notice of it; and if it was true, 'twas a Scandal for them to Need it, and therefore desired the Club to Note it down, that our Reformers need Reforming.

This was own'd to be fair, and the Defendant could not oppose it.

A. S. Sent a Messenger to the Society to acquaint them, That having given his Son a Thousand Pounds to begin with, and after that, settled 50*l.* per Annum upon him, to make a Joynture for his Wife; and being since that, fallen to Decay, and having been obliged to Borrow 20*l.* of his Son, which he could not pay him at the time appointed; his Son had Arrested him, and he had been four days in a Spunging-House at his Son's Suit.

The Society was Astonish'd at the Story, and ask'd the Messenger what Testimony there was of the Circumstances; but when they had Authentick Proof of the Fact, they Resolv'd,

*That a Letter be Written to the Wretch that had done it, in the Name of the Society, to put him in mind of his Duty; but they would make no Entrance of the Story into their Books, because they would not leave such a Reproach to Posterity, and let them know that such a Horrible thing was Practis'd in this Age, without a Law to Punish it.*

A Coal-Merchant was brought before the Society for Blasphemy, and was Accused of saying, That God Almighty had not dealt fairly with them, in sending such Warm Weather before they look'd for it, which had brought down the Price of Coals, in spite of all their forg'd News, buying up of Quantities, and such like Practices.

The Man was Silent'd as to the words,

but Recriminated upon the Accuser, and told the Society he was a Coal-fobber, that he manag'd the Matter for the Lighter-men, Forg'd and Wrote the Letter of the Colliers being taken by the French: used always, when a large Fleet of Colliers came in, to keep 50 or 60 Sail back, about half way free, till the price of Coals should rise again, together with a Thousand Villanous Practices to keep up the Coals.

The Society concluded *they were both Rogues*, and enter'd it down as a certain Truth, that the dearth of Coals has been chiefly occasioned by the Jugling and Frauds of the *Crimps and Lighter-men*, more than by Defects in Convoys, Want of Sea-men, or the like.

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